

## **PRESS RELEASE**

St. Maarten, 05.09.2016

# **Port St. Maarten responds to SMMTA**

**September 05, 2016 – The Port St. Maarten Group of Companies (Port) hereby responds to the press release of the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association (SMMTA).**

The SMMTA presents itself as “the voice of St. Maarten’s marine industry that works together with other industry groups and all levels of government to provide a strong and consistent say for the marine industry”. Contrary to this mission statement, the SMMTA fails to cooperate, let alone directly communicate, with one of the island’s key promoters of the marine industry: the Port and its subsidiary the Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority Corporation (SLAC) N.V.

Earlier this year, SLAC placed a two-page advertisement in the print media in which it responded to a press release by the SMMTA. In this advertisement SLAC explained in detail the role that it plays in relation to the Simpson Bay Lagoon, as well as the difficult circumstances and restrictions under which it has to operate. Although the SMMTA announced that it ‘would respond in multiple press releases on the misrepresentations presented by SLAC’, nothing was ever heard from the SMMTA again.

The Port is fully owned by the Government of St. Maarten and as such it ultimately belongs to the people of St. Maarten – it represents the interests of St. Maarten and not those of foreign investors. Anything that the Port does is done in the best interest of our island, whether that concerns the port at Great Bay or the Simpson Bay Lagoon. It’s a common known fact that the Simpson Bay Lagoon and Simpson Bay’s environmental and infrastructural state are in much need of an improvement. The Port is and remains committed to achieve this, one clear example being the construction of the Simpson Bay Causeway, a US\$ 50 million plus investment to improve the traffic situation in the Simpson Bay area.

The Port sees little added value in publicly responding to every press release issued by the SMMTA. Instead, it calls upon the SMMTA to start communicating and cooperating with the Port to jointly further promote St. Maarten as one of the premier marine destinations in the Caribbean. Isn’t that the SMMTA’s ultimate goal after all? The Port’s door is always open.



**PHOTO CUTLINE:** Photo showing the area where a resolution was found due to settling rainwater that presented challenges to pedestrians using the sidewalk.

For further questions, please contact: [comments@portofstmaarten.com](mailto:comments@portofstmaarten.com)